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ABSTRACT

Sociological Resources for the Social Studies (SRSS) has three major projects: 1) a series of paperback readers written for a high school audience, each of an aspect of sociology, 2) a series of 20-30 short "episodes" on various sociological topics, and 3) a one-semester course in sociology for high school students, which is described here. Organized on a topical approach, the course centers about four sociological domains--socialization, institutionalization, stratification, and social change. Wide ranging methods of presentation are used in the four parts, from narrowly defined problems and clearly stated variables, to data presented in a literary form. There are several distinctive features of the course: 1) Though deductive aspects of reasoning are included, the emphasis is on learning major concepts and generalizations through indictive methods and inquiry: 2) Students are actively involved in a wide range of activities and materials; 3) An elaborate Instructor's Guide is an integral part of the course; and 4) Teachers and sociologists collaborate in developing the materials. The course has undergone national classroom evaluation and subsequent revision. Unfortunately, it will not be available until January 1, 1972, when Allyn and Bacon expect to publish it. ED 042 675 through ED 042 679 are related documents. (JLB)

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A REPORT ON INQUIRIES IN SOCIOLOGY

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Sociological Resources for the Social Studies

A Paper Prepared for Delivery at the Fiftieth Annual Meeting
of the National Council for the Social Studies

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A REPORT ON INQUIRIES IN SOCIOLOGY

Several years ago, Everett Wilson and I prepared a paper for presentation at the Convention of the American Sociological Association in which we express our reactions to the first trial teaching of the SRSS sociology course. (I should add that we had just finished a rather intensive round of observations in the trial schools.) As the paper took shape, we were, of course, faced with the problem of what to call it. We finally hit upon what I consider to be a most appropriate title, "Nobody Knows The Troubles I've Seen: Launching a High School Course in Sociology." We felt at that time that we had encountered many, if not most, of the problems that a curriculum project could possibly run afoul of, and that it was time to disclose all. Since that time, the course has gone through two revisions and has been field tested nationally in over 200 high schools. To put it with considerable restraint, the experience has been informative. In fact, we now have more than enough material for a paper which could be called "Nobody Knows the Troubles I've Seen: Revisited."

The new high school sociology course, which is called *Inquiries in Sociology*, should be set in context. SRSS has three major projects. First is a series of paperback readers edited by Helen Hughes, former editor of the *American Journal of Sociology*. Each book presents about twenty short readings on a particular aspect of sociology. The articles are selected primarily from professional journals and are completely rewritten for the high school audience. The seven titles in the paperback series are: *Cities and City Life*

Life in Families, Racial and Ethnic Relations, Delinquents and Criminals: Their Social World, Social Organizations, Population Growth and the Complex Society, and *Crowd and Mass Behavior*. Four of the books are currently published and are on display at the Allyn and Bacon booth in the exhibit hall.

A second SRSS project is a series of between twenty and thirty short units (we call them "episodes") on sundry sociological questions. Each episode runs about two weeks in length, emphasizes inquiry modes of teaching and, at the teacher's discretion, may be plugged into various social studies courses. Five episodes are currently published.

The third SRSS project, the one I am reporting on today, is a one-semester course in sociology for high school students. Work on the course began at a workshop held on the Dartmouth campus during the summer of 1966. There, five sociologists and eight high school teachers thrashed out a set of content areas around which a high school sociology course might be constructed. Two main criteria were used in selecting these content areas: importance to the field of sociology and interest to high school students. It should not be assumed, however, that the decision to focus the course on selected topics from the field of sociology was an easy one. Consideration was given, in turn, to building the course around a list of basic concepts, a set of established generalizations, or a number of substantive topics. In many respects the decision to use the topic approach was a practical one. The five sociologists at the workshop had difficulty agreeing upon a set of accepted generalizations or on the importance of a particular generalization to the field of sociology. Furthermore, each sociologist seemed to be representing a different model or belief as to, "What is sociology?" and wished to see the emphasis placed on his particular set of generalizations and concepts. The high school teachers

also felt uneasy with the generalization and concept approach, and had difficuoty seeing how the course would be structured or, even more important, how the structure might be conveyed to the practicing teacher in the field. For these reasons, the decision was to use the topic approach and to present the basic concepts through the topics.

Building on the suggestions from the Dartmouth workshop, the staff of SRSS developed a course outline around four sociological domains that are conventionally labelled: socialization, institutionalization, stratification, and social change. At this point, sociologists were selected to develop the four parts of the course. Each sociologist was paired with a person having high school teaching experience to form what we call a field design team. Exceptionally able social studies teachers were selected and each made significant contributions to the development of the course. The six teachers involved were John Heffley, Amherst, Massachusetts; Miriam Roach, Nashville, Tennessee; Lee Smith, St. Louis Park, Minnesota; Richard Sprague, Newtonville, Massachusetts; Sheldon Stein, Davis, California; and Morris Zahl, Woodland, California. In addition, Larry Metcalf of the University of Illinois agreed to serve as Educational Consultant.

If you will refer to the outline of the course shown in the handout materials, you will see that it starts (after an introduction) where the adolescent is, and by tracing the course of socialization, helps him see how he got that way. Part I opens with an exercise in which students are asked to categorize the activities shown in twenty photographs depicting various aspects of human behavior. Students eventually categorize these activities into those most common to adults, those most common to adolescents, and those shared about equally by adults and adolescents. This activity serves as a jumping

off place for a discussion of the social nature of adolescents and helps develop the concept of social category. At this point, there is a backdrop to the question: How does one become an adolescent? Or, more generally: How does one become human? This question serves as a starting point for our discussion of socialization which develops the concepts seen on the second handout. The second half of Part I returns to the adolescent subculture concept and deals more specifically with adolescent rebellion. By replicating sociological studies we are able to give students some notion of how scientific methods can be applied to a study of the social world.

Following Part I the course moves, as does the adolescent, into the social structure of the adult world, a structure seen from two perspectives: institutions and stratification. Part II, dealing with institutions, presents quite a contrast to the materials in Part I. Part I deals with narrowly-defined problems, clearly-stated variables indexed by combining responses from a questionnaire, and data which are manipulated to test hypotheses. In Part II, however, the data are presented in literary form. We don't speak much about sharply-defined variables. Instead, we try to give students an almost intuitive approach to those "frozen answers to fundamental problems" that we fix in institutions.

The contrast between Parts I and II isn't accidental--it was planned for two reasons. First, from a pedagogical standpoint, a change of pace breaks the routine, increasing both interest and motivation. Second, sociology--like other fields--has many subdivisions, many classes of data and many modes of inquiry. For example, many sociologists prefer to deal as precisely as possible with narrowly-defined problems by means of mathematical techniques. Others, who lean more toward the humanities, prefer rich and varied documentary

material that reveals human motivation and stimulates incites into man's social life. It is our conviction at SRSS, that even though students can't begin to get a complete sense of the field of sociology in one semester, they should at least see some contrasting approaches.

Part III of the course shifts from a study of the institutional structure of society to an examination of how U.S. society is stratified. Materials in both Parts I and II provide evidence that society is not a collection of random ways of believing and behaving; it does have a discernible structure. But this structure--the arrangement of social parts--is very complex. In addition to the patterns of behavior seen in institutional structures, society can be viewed in terms of its class structure--a horizontal or lateral division based on the value system peculiar to each society. Thus when we move from the institutional structure of society to the class structure, we move from the means developed to preserve the social order to the *ends* and *values* men cherish. Ends and values are reflected in the stratification system which we deal with from the standpoint of social class and ethnicity.

The theme of deviance and change that threads its way through earlier sections of the course is explicitly treated in a concluding section on social change. In the first three parts of the course, the social world is viewed as if it is more or less static or unchanging. This perspective, of course, is a matter of emphasis, an approach intended to help students more easily understand the underlying complexities of social life. But in Part IV attention is directed to viewing the social world across time, as something dynamic, always changing. If students are now able to see a group or a society as a structure of relationships, they should find it easier to think of social change as the sociologist does, that is, as an alteration in that structure. Two examples,

the shift from rural past to urban present and the development of the Civil Rights Movement, are used to explore the complex process of social change. Given this outline, we think the course has an intelligible structure and conceptual integrity.

There are several distinctive features of *Inquiries in Sociology*. First, its emphasis is on learning through inquiry. We have tried to make students active partners in the learning process by--as much as possible--posing questions and encouraging students to work out their own conclusions before turning to the text or teacher. There is a recurrent instructional pattern that goes like this: question--data--analysis--tentative answer. In short, the emphasis is strongly inductive, requiring a high level of student participation. This is not to say that the deductive aspects of reasoning are ignored. For we, of course, constantly move back and forth in our thinking from induction to deduction. In fact, several lessons in Part I of the course are devoted to an activity involving the development of hypotheses from given propositions and the testing of these hypotheses using data from the students themselves.

Second, students are actively involved in a wide range of activities and materials. These activities and materials include such things as field work, questionnaires, quasi-laboratory exercises, historical and anthropological materials, categorizing the behavior depicted in photographs, auctioning nickels in class (to illustrate the development of a norm), ranking occupations, and working out solutions for reducing prejudice. This variety of materials and activities, together with a high degree of student involvement has, in most settings, produced a high degree of student motivation.

The third factor which distinguishes *Inquiries in Sociology* is the elaborate Instructors' Guide which is an integral part of the course. One

characteristic of teaching materials designed to promote inquiry is that the student materials, by themselves, may make little sense and may even seem incomplete or disjointed. This is due to the intentional withholding of information from the students, the posing of a question which students are to ponder, or perhaps from asking students to engage in an original research problem for which the answer is unknown. This problem of disjointedness does not face the author of a more traditional student text where, if a question is asked at all, the answer is soon to follow. The Instructors' Guide for *Inquiries in Sociology* can, in a sense, be viewed as filling in the gaps which are intentionally built into the student text. But in addition to the student text and Instructors' Guide, there are also supplemental handouts, worksheets, and information that needs to be placed in the hands of the students but that could not be placed into the student text without destroying the inquiry emphasis of the materials. In addition, ~~fourteen~~ fifteen transparencies have been developed for use with the course. All this means that when you examine *Inquiries in Sociology* (as well as most other inquiry-oriented teaching materials) you should study the student text, the Instructors' Guide, and the supplements in conjunction. In no other way can you get a total picture of the experiences students will get in the classroom when all the materials are fused into a complete teaching unit.

And finally, a fourth distinctive feature of the course, one that I touched on earlier, is the collaboration of teachers and sociologists in developing the material. Not too many years ago, a cooperative effort between professionals in any discipline and high school teachers was unheard of. Fortunately, this is no longer true. Many of the current curriculum projects have made high school teachers active and equal partners in the development

of their materials. High school teachers, through their involvement in all developmental stages of this course, have made invaluable contributions.

An important aspect of the work of SRSS is the classroom evaluation of our materials. This is an important point for I believe it to be one of the significant advantages of having curricular materials developed by well-funded national curriculum studies. Curricular materials developed by local school writing teams and those developed by single authors or publishing houses have usually been given meager if any field testing prior to publication. In contrast, materials produced by various national social studies curriculum projects have been through rigorous field testing and evaluation by the potential consumer, both students and teachers. The SRSS course is no exception. The course was given an initial trial by nine teachers in the spring of 1968. It was revised accordingly and in the spring of 1969 was evaluated nationally by 222 teachers and over 9,000 students. The teachers included in the sample for the national trial ranged from those with virtually no training in sociology to teachers who had participated in a year-long institute leading to a master's degree in sociology. Teachers from thirty-four states and the District of Columbia were included in this sample. A variety of techniques were used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the course. These included: multiple choice examinations, student and teacher questionnaires and rating scales, daily teaching logs, and classroom observations by SRSS staff. You might be interested in knowing that, for purposes of revision, the most valuable information was gleaned from the daily teaching logs.

Some of you, I hope, are now raising the question, where, or more appropriately, when can I get a copy of the course. Unfortunately, the answer to the where question is that you can't. The answer to the when question is not

until next year. The publication date established by Allyn and Bacon, publisher of all SRSS materials, is January 1, 1972. However, the course will be available for examination before that and will be on display at next year's NCSS meeting. In one respect, this delay in publication is a blessing since it will allow us to update the course with the 1970 census data. We took the opportunity this year to report to you on the course for the simple reason that SRSS is going out of existence this summer and will not be conducting a section meeting at next year's convention.

Given the delay in publication of the SRSS course, many people ask us what we recommend that they do if they want to introduce a sociology course. Our answer is perhaps an obvious one. Five of our episodes are currently available as are four of the paperback books. Additional episodes and paperbacks will become available during this school year. Until the course becomes available one could string these items together, along with other items selected locally, to make up a sociology course. But one must be careful in using the episodes this way. Each episode is viewed as an independent teaching unit designed to be inserted into already existing social studies courses. Consequently, there may be some content overlap from episode to episode. However, by carefully selecting from the available episodes, this problem should be kept to a minimum. We are indeed sorry about the delay in publication, but we think that the quality of the final product will more than offset any immediate inconvenience.